

Arizona Department of Education

Early Childhood Education

ECE Unit and Head Start State Collaboration Office



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2013

Please share this publication with all of your preschool and related services staff (speech pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.) and other interested parties. [Past publications](#) are online.

First Things First Scholarship Program Update

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Early Childhood Education (ECE) unit partners with the First Things First (FTF) Pre-K Scholarship Program to assist in building local systems of quality early childhood education. Currently 82 programs have been awarded Pre-K scholarships and are seeking a Quality First star rating of a 3 or above. FTF regions supporting this strategy are Central Maricopa, Central Pima, Navajo Nation, Northwest Maricopa, Northeast Maricopa, North Phoenix, Pascua Yaqui, Southwest Maricopa, Southeast Maricopa, South Pima, South Phoenix, and Yuma. All programs are currently awaiting the results of their Quality First Star Rating. ADE/ECE Specialists provide ongoing guidance to programs in support of the achievement of high quality early education as reflected by the star rating system. Responsibilities of ECE Specialists are to assist Pre-K Scholarship Programs by:

- providing technical assistance and professional development with the purpose of supporting implementation of developmentally appropriate strategies and approaches to learning;
- assisting in the implementation of researched based practices that will most likely achieve improved student outcomes;
- assisting in the development of implementation plans to achieve improved levels of quality; and
- attending meetings, conferences, workshops in the community to continually seek ways to bridge theory and practice for project participants;

ADE looks forward to continuing this successful partnership with FTF to support quality early childhood education through the Pre-K Scholarship Program.

SIGN UP NOW FOR BOOT CAMP!

Boot Camp is scheduled for June 10-13, 2013. This year's sessions will be held at the Phoenix Marriott Mesa. Registration is filling up. [Register Online](#) now!

Lighthouse Programs

Visit one!

Laveen Elementary
Phoenix
602.237.9100

Sunnyside Unified
Tucson
520.545.2000

**Flowing Wells Unified
Emily Meschler Early
Learning Center**
Tucson, AZ
520.696.8800

Isaac Elementary
Phoenix
602.442.2900

Peoria Unified
Phoenix
623.486.6470

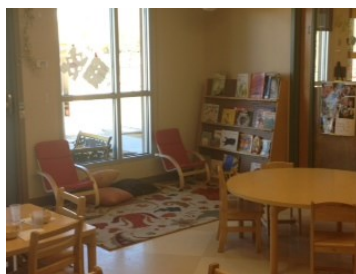
**Desert Sun Child
Development Center**
Chandler
480.831.1718

**Valley View Early
Learning Center**
Tucson
520.209.7650

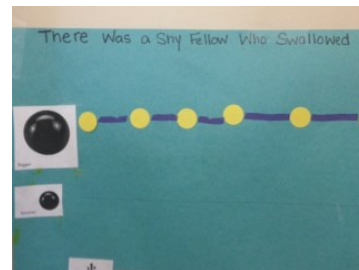
Lighthouse Program #7: Valley View Early Learning Center

Valley View Early Learning Center is the full inclusion preschool program in the Catalina Foothills School District in Tucson. We have had a full inclusion program for 24 years. In our building, there are 6 classrooms that serve 135 typically developing and developmentally delayed 3-5 year olds. All of our classrooms are mixed ages and abilities. A young 3's class accommodates children that enter late in the year or transition before age 3. Twenty percent (20%) of the students in each class have an IEP. We have a maximum class size of 18 and there is a certified general education teacher, a special education teacher or assistant (depending on the day), and a general education assistant in each classroom each day. That is a 1:6 ratio. We are open from 7am to 6pm to provide extended care hours for those who need it. We are funded by state special education funds, Quality First scholarships and primarily, by parent paid tuition. We are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

As part of our ECQUIP process, the past two years we have been focused on increasing instructional support as defined by the CLASS assessment. As a staff, we read the NAEYC publication *Powerful Interactions*. All teaching staff were included in the work—general education teachers, special education teachers and all teaching assistants. We practiced implementing some of the strategies for extending thinking such as using rich vocabulary, helping children to see themselves as thinkers, responding to curiosity and solving problems together. Next, we began videotaping ourselves. We reviewed the tapes together during monthly staff meetings, similar to how an athlete reviews game film to analyze his/her work. This gave us an opportunity to reflect upon what we were doing well and make adjustments to be even better. This developed common language, common practices and expectations for everyone. The children have benefitted from our efforts to Be Present, Connect, and Extend Thinking. After one year, our scores in every domain of the CLASS increased, validating our work with *Powerful Interactions*.



Indoor and outdoor reading centers



Uses data to see relationships



Cowboy unit dramatic play center

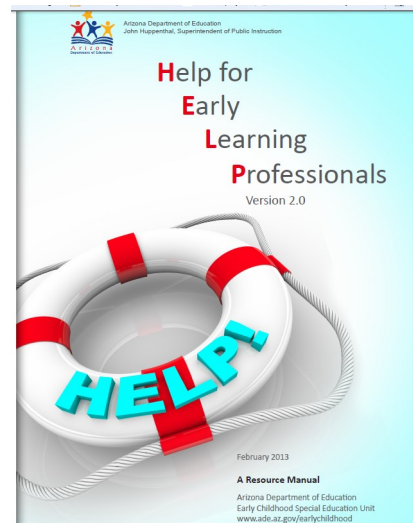


HELP MANUAL

By: Val Andrews-James

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In case you have not heard, the long awaited Version 2.0 of the **Help for Early Learning Professionals** (HELP) Manual is now on the [Early Childhood Website](#). Currently it is listed under “Hot Topics” on the front page and will remain under the “Publications” icon (right side of website) and under “EC Programs”, “Resources” on the Early Childhood Special Education web page. A group of very dedicated early childhood special educators assisted in this very large and time consuming project. We at the Department of Education cannot thank them enough. The purpose of the HELP Manual is to provide all early childhood educators with information and resources for working with children with special needs from the Child Find/Early Intervention Transition processes to the Individual Education Program (IEP) process to Transition to Kindergarten Process. We have added sections on Funding, Independent Education Evaluations, Certification and Partnering with Other Agencies. We also included a separate section on Prior Written Notices and worked to incorporate more charts and visual resources.



Our hope is that the HELP Manual will assist you, your staff and future staff by having information and resources all in one place. Helpful tips such as facilitating special education meetings with agendas, charts you can post and sample forms are also a part of the manual. Feel free to send feedback and ideas for HELP Version 3.0!

We plan on printing the HELP Manual and having it available at the 2013 Director’s Institute in August. In September of 2013 and January of 2014, we will conduct HELP Professional Development opportunities and will provide printed copies of the HELP Manual to participants. Keep an eye out for those conferences to be posted on the [Early Childhood Calendar of Events](#).

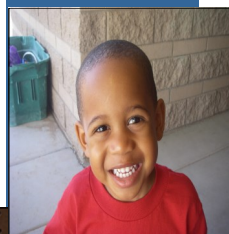
“Fairness is not everyone getting the same thing. Fairness is when every child gets what they need.”

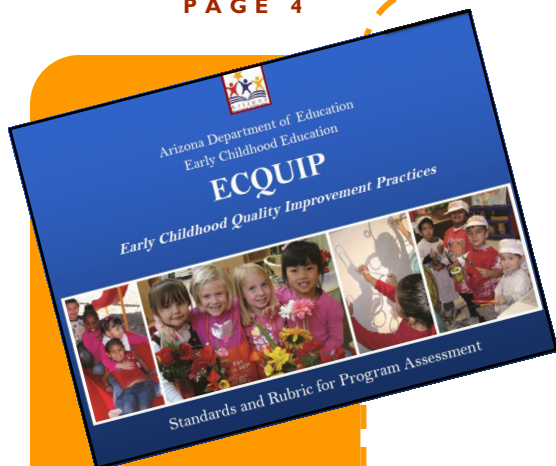
Staff Changes

In December, **Pat Immele** our early childhood financial specialist retired. Pat spent 26 years at the Arizona Department of Education, providing technical assistance with Grants Management and special education funding. She was part of the original team when the Early Childhood Unit opened, and previously worked in Food and Nutrition. We will miss Pat and wish her all the best in retirement.

Juliana Panqueva has been with the Arizona Department of Education for two years. Previously our administrative assistant, Juliana has been promoted to replace Pat as financial specialist. She has a finance degree and general management degree from Portland State University. She is already doing a fantastic job. Congratulations to Juliana on her promotion!!!

Evelyn Irvine is our new administrative assistant. She has been with the Arizona Department of Education for four years. She transfers to us from the Career and Technical Education Unit. Please welcome Evelyn when you call our office.





ECQUIP

To meet the annual requirements of the [Early Childhood Quality Improvement Process](#), districts can now upload [Quality Enhancement Plans](#) to the ALEAT (Arizona LEA Tracker) system. Since the process of uploading Enhancement Plans to ALEAT was a new requirement that began in late fall, districts should have uploaded their 2012-13 Enhancement Plan by **March 30, 2013**.

Going forward, Quality Enhancement Plans should reflect implementation strategies intended for the *upcoming* school year. Here is a timeline of due dates as we transition this process:

- March 30, 2013:** 2012-2013 ECQUIP Enhancement Plan uploaded to ALEAT
- May 30-August 30, 2013:** 2013-2014 ECQUIP Enhancement Plan uploaded to ALEAT
- May 31, 2014:** 2014-2015 ECQUIP Enhancement Plan uploaded to ALEAT

Questions about ECQUIP Process: ECEInbox@azed.gov / 602.364.1530
 Questions about ALEAT: ALEAT@azed.gov / 602.542.4353

*Kindness is
the language
which the deaf
can hear and
the blind can
see*

~Mark Twain

Early Childhood Annual Survey

The Arizona Department of Education annually surveys school districts as part of our effort to provide "Knock Your Socks Off Customer Service". *We appreciate those of you who participated in our annual survey in February. We take your responses very seriously.*



Summer Safety!

With the weather warming up in sunny Arizona children are spending more time outdoors. The [SunWise Skin Cancer Prevention School Program](#) offers information for teachers, families, and community members regarding sun safety. Use the [SunWise Tip Sheet](#) in class, send home to families and/or include in school newsletters. Remember to cover-up, wear sunscreen, and offer shade!

SLIP on a shirt!

SLAP on a hat!

SLOP on sunscreen!

Arizona Statewide Early Childhood Autism Project (AzSECAP) Accepted Applications

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by Val Andrews-James



Nine district teams, including an administrator for each team participated in a three day professional development event on January 23rd through 25th with STAR Autism Support®. Participants learned evidence-based strategies for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, integrating them with best practices in early childhood. Time was spent practicing skills and team planning for students. All teams have now had two coaching site visits with opportunities to practice new skills with the guidance of a STAR Coach. It was awesome! We anticipate adding two more days of coaching for each site for a total of five on-site coaching days. Preparation for Cohort #2 begins with the three days of training on July 15, 16, 17. Cohort #3 is scheduled for January 22, 23, 24.

Our goal is to build the capacity of district early childhood autism teams to work with children who have or are suspected of having an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The nine districts in Cohort #2 are:

**Chandler
Kingman
Pendergast**

**Kyrene
Humboldt
Alhambra**

**Washington
Liberty
TBA**

If you are interested in applying for Cohort #2 or # 3, please contact [Evelyn Irvine](#) for an application. We may have openings in Cohort #2 and there are openings in Cohort #3.



The Autism Awareness Ribbon

The puzzle pattern of this ribbon reflects the mystery and complexity of autism.

The different colors and shapes represents the diversity of people and families living with this disorder.

The brightness of this ribbon signals hope - hope through research and increasing awareness in people like you.



Arizona Early Learning Standards (AzELS)

By: Terry Doolan

The Arizona Early Learning Standards revisions are almost complete! We had a core team of 25 participants that met three times to work on the standard revisions in order to align with the Arizona Common Core Standards. Participants were divided into three teams who reviewed: mathematics, language and literacy or the rest of the standards.

The second team of approximately 25 worked on the alignment and integration pages. They met one time and spent the entire day completing the work.

The AzELS were then vetted around the state to gain input from all interested parties and stakeholders. We offered approximately 25 different opportunities for folks to participate in a vetting, including online.

Approximately 150 people attended onsite vettings all over the state and five entries were received from online vetting.

We are now going through all of the entries received from the vettings and making changes as needed. We have received excellent ideas and suggestions from the field. We expect the standards to be completed by the end of April and to go to the board in May.

Thanks to everyone that participated in some way in our revisions!



*The best and most
beautiful things in
the world cannot
be seen or even
touched ~ they
must be felt within
the heart.*

~ Helen Keller

DEC Conference Summary

by Kathy Coloma

On Saturday, March 2nd over one hundred early childhood professionals came together to learn about social thinking and its implication in the classroom. The Arizona chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children's Division of Early Childhood and the Arizona Department of Education partnered to bring this engaging training to the State.

So what is social thinking? SocialThinking.com defines it as "what we do when we interact with people: we think about them. And how we think about people affects how we behave, which in turn affects how others respond to us, which in turn affects our own emotions."

Social thinking may not come naturally for everyone and has nothing to do with IQ. As early childhood professionals we may have thought of children who struggle with social thinking as the "problem behaviors" in the classroom. Those who participated in the conference received information on what they can do to assist children who struggle in their social-emotional development and improve social thinking for all children.

For more information on social thinking, visit www.socialthinking.com

Filing an AzEIP Alert? Use the C2BInbox!

by Kathy Coloma

Did you know the Early Childhood Unit at ADE has an email address dedicated to Transition from Early Intervention to Preschool? When you want to file an alert to us about a late referral, a transition gone wrong, or you have a general transition question, please send an email to C2BInbox@azed.gov. This email address is a quick way for you to let us know about challenges and successes in your area related to transitions from AzEIP, and a way for us to help you as well as gather information about what is happening in the State. IF you receive an email from this address, it comes from ADE!

Service Coordinators from AzEIP are also **required** to send ADE copies of all PEA Notification/Referral Forms. Those that are sent electronically are sent to this email address as well. Once received, the forms are entered into a database and the data is used to pinpoint areas for improvement and possible training related to transition.

PLAY GROUP

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Public School Leadership Alliance for Young Children (formerly known as Early Childhood Consortium)

Information about the PLAY group has been added to the [Early Childhood website](#).

Click below or see this icon on our website



Kim Freehan
Early Childhood Specialist
Mesa Public Schools
kafreeha@mpsaz.org

Last meeting for this year ~ stay in tune with the

Play Group on the [Play Group Website](#)

COME JOIN THE PLAY GROUP!!

May 8 — ADE, [NEW](#) Central Ave Location

3300 N. Central, 16th Floor

Park in visitor parking in 3300 Parking Garage off
2nd Avenue ~ bring parking ticket to be validated

221

*The number of
professional
development
opportunities
provided by
ADE/ECE since
August 1*

4,592

*The number of
attendees
participating in
ECE professional
development
opportunities
provided by
ADE/ECE since*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Have you been to the professional development website lately? Be sure to see what's offered as you kick off 2013!! [Early Childhood Calendar of Events](#). Sign up today!

Early Childhood Education Contacts

**Amy Corriveau, Deputy Associate Superintendent &
Head Start State Collaboration Director**

602-364-1530

Amy.Corriveau@azed.gov

**Terry Doolan, Director
Early Childhood Education**

602-542-1137

Terry.Doolan@azed.gov

**Val Andrews-James, Director
Early Childhood Special Education/619**

602-364-1530

Val.Andrewsjames@azed.gov

Teaching Strategies GOLD questions, contact:

Holly Ford, ECSE Program Specialist

602-542-2790

Holly.Ford@azed.gov

AzEIP Alerts and Early Intervention Transitions ques-
tions, contact:

Kathy Coloma, ECSE Program Specialist

602-542-8732

Kathy.Coloma@azed.gov or C2BInbox@azed.gov

Juliana Panqueva, Finance Specialist

602-542-8812

Juliana.Panqueva@azed.gov

Alma Quintana, Project Specialist

602-364-1910

Alma.Quintana@azed.gov

Evelyn Irvine, Administrative Asst.

602-364-1530

Evelyn.Irvine@azed.gov

Alison Keough, Program Specialist

602-542-4615

Alison.Keough@azed.gov

Beth Haas, Program Specialist

602-542-3136

Beth.Haas@azed.gov

Lauren Preston, Program Specialist

602-542-1102

Lauren.Preston@azed.gov

Millie Archer, Program Specialist

602-364-1966

Millicent.Archer@azed.gov

Nicol Russell, PD Program Specialist

602-542-1113

Nicol.Russell@azed.gov

Susan Lewis, Program Specialist

602-542-3160

Susan.Lewis@azed.gov

Tina Sykes, Program Specialist

602-542-2790

Tina.Sykes@azed.gov

Willette Watts, Program Specialist

602-542-3143

Willette.Watts@azed.gov

Great Resources

[Promising Practices \(0-3\)](#)

[Early Hearing Detection and
Intervention](#) Newsletters

[The Ear Foundation of Arizona](#)

[Arizona Disability Resource
Guide: The Blue Pages](#)

Reminders

**Next GOLD Checkpoint
5/31/13**



Association of Supportive Child
Care—[Catalog of Professional
Development](#)

[Southwest Human Development
Inclusion Program](#)—supporting
children with special needs in
Child Care and Preschools